

same time it is tjuite unnecessary to go beyond the essential facts, "which, may be recounted with comparative brevity.

When Zola married, about the time he began his Bougon-Macquart novels, he certainly looked forward to a life of unalloyed happiness. But though he achieved celebrity and became possessed of comparative wealth, though his wife was all love and devotion, there remained a great void in his existence. He had no child, and the desire for paternity was strong within him. One can trace it through many of his books, and there is no doubt whatever that it became a fixed idea with him, was responsible for some of his petty superstitions, and entered even into that dread of death which the loss of his mother and of his friend Flaubert at one time suggested. He would die and would leave no posterity. Of what value was life, then ? He had always regarded transmission as being its first essential function; and it tortured him at times to think that he was famous, that he was rich, and that he would leave no offspring behind him.

It may be said that this happens to many men; that some become more or less reconciled to it; that some go, quietly grieving, to their graves. Others, however, are egotistical enough to experience no desire for paternity. There are also instances of men to whom an extreme culture imparts a

kind of self-sufficingness: for example, all the
unmarried
philosophers, from those of Greece to those
of our own
times. Even among the great men who have
married one
will find many unblessed with offspring.
Scientists have
occasionally tried to explain this in one way or
another, but
no explanation seems to be of general
applicability. In that
connection one must remember that there
have also been